

STATES OF JERSEY



AMENDMENT TO STANDING ORDERS – DEADLINE FOR CHALLENGING WRITTEN RESPONSES

Lodged au Greffe on 30th January 2025
by the Privileges and Procedures Committee
Earliest date for debate: 18th March 2025

STATES GREFFE

PROPOSITION

THE STATES are asked to decide whether they are of opinion to make the following amendment to the Standing Orders of the States of Jersey with immediate effect –

1. Standing Order 12 [Written reply to a question]

In paragraph (4), for sub-paragraph (a) substitute –

“(a) the questioner must refer the matter to the Bailiff before 12.45 p.m. on the meeting day of the meeting for which the order paper lists the question in accordance with standing order 39(2)(a), except that, for any question listed on a revised or supplementary order paper (in accordance with standing order 39(3)) that did not appear on the original order paper, the deadline shall be 12.45 p.m. on the subsequent meeting day;”.

PRIVILEGES AND PROCEDURES COMMITTEE

REPORT

This amendment to Standing Orders would amend the provisions relating to the challenge that may be brought against the response to a Written Question.

At its meeting on 9th December 2024, the Committee agreed that an amendment to Standing Orders should be proposed following consideration of a proposal from Deputy Moore. The Deputy had highlighted that the timeline for challenging responses to Written Questions was too short. The Committee's subsequent consideration took into account that the provisions of Standing Order 12 mean a different timeline for challenge applies depending on when the Written Question was submitted – and that the deadline in some instances was less than 24 hours upon receipt of the response.

The process by which a Member can challenge, on the basis of relevance, a response they have received to a Written Question, and the timeline which applies, are set out in Standing Order 12; Paragraph 4(a) of which states that –

“If the questioner believes that the reply contravenes paragraph (2A) and wishes to take the opinion of the Bailiff on the matter, the questioner must refer the matter to the Bailiff before 12.45 pm on the meeting day of the meeting for which the order paper lists the question in accordance with Standing Order 39(2)(a).”

The way Standing Order 12(4) is drafted means that different timescales apply to different Written Questions, given that Members are able to submit Written Questions in every week when the Assembly is in session, but an Order Paper is only produced every 3 weeks on the basis of the meeting cycle. This current provision reflects an earlier amendment. When the weekly system of Written Questions was introduced, the deadline in each case was 12:45pm on the day following receipt of the response (regardless of whether it was a meeting day or not). This was felt to be too short a deadline and the current timelines were therefore introduced, albeit that the ‘next day’ deadline continued (and continues) to apply to questions submitted in the last week of the cycle. In other words, where the response to a Written Question is received on the Monday that is the day before a meeting day, the deadline is 12:45pm on the next day.

The proposed amendment would address the timeline for Written Questions submitted in that last week of the cycle. With the amendment, the deadline for challenging the response to any Written Question published on the Consolidated Order Paper would move to the day of the next States Meeting (disregarding Continuation Days). This would mean no Member would, in future, have less than 24 hours to challenge the response they had received, albeit that different timelines would still apply depending on when a Member had submitted their Written Question.

Financial and staffing implications

There are no financial or staffing implications arising from adoption of the proposition.

Children’s Rights Impact Assessment

A Children’s Rights Impact Assessment (CRIA) has not been prepared in relation to this proposition as a CRIA is not required, in accordance with Schedule 2 to the [Children \(Convention Rights\) \(Jersey\) Law 2022](#)